A

SERMON

Concerning the
Doctrine, *Unity*, and *Profession*
OF THE

Christian Faith.

Preached before the

UNIVERSITY
OF
OXFORD.

To which is added
An APPENDIX concerning
the Apostles CREED.

By *THO. SMITH*, B. D. and Fellow of St. *Mary Magdalen* Colledge, *OXON.*

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Admodum Reverendo in Christo Patri
ac Domino,

HENRICO,

D. Episcopo LONDINENSI,
Sacelli Regalis DECANO,
Regiæ Majestati à Secretioribus Conciliis;
Natalium Splendore,
Morum Sanctitate,
Fide, Prudentiâ ac invictâ animi fortitudine
contra infensissimos Eccl. Ang. *hostes;*
Cæterisque dotibus, quæ Virum Apostolicum planè decent, Illustri:
T. S. *Concionem hanc de Unitate fidei,*
coram Academicis Oxonienſibus *in*
Templo B. Mariæ *non ita*
pridem habitam,
una cum Appendice de Symbolo Apostolico;
gratitudinis & observantiæ ergo,
L. M. D. C. Q.

Ephes. 4. Ver. 5.

One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism.

IT is sad to consider, how that *Christianity* has suffered more by the Factions and Feuds of *Christians* themselves, than by the Fury of its Professed Adversaries; that Schism has done more Mischief to the Church of God than all the Persecutions of the *Heathen Roman* Emperours, who made it their business to abolish and destroy the very name of *Christian* out of the World; and that *Christians* should treat one another with that despight and Malice, as if good Nature and Charity, and a mutual forbearance were things of meer indifference: As it has happened between Churches of different Communions in the *East* and *West*, and in these *Northern* parts of the World since the *Reformation*, either because they would not own an Usurpt and pretended Universal Authority, or else because of some little disagreement in Opinion, or the Usage, or Non-usage of a Ceremony, which every particular Church, in dependence upon, and in conjunction with the Civil Power, has a right to Ordain and Constitute, and which all its Members are Obliged to conform to, out of a Principle of Conscience. For hitherto must be referred, as to their chief and proper Causes, all those horrid Tumults and Separations of Parties, which

have ſo much diſtracted the Peace of the Church from its firſt Beginnings and Infancy to this day, however blancht over by ſome with ſubtilty and Artifice of Wit, and by others with pretenſions of Zeal, to colour their Ambition and their Pride, and to render their ill Deſigns the more plauſible and ſucceſsful. Here it is (for I cannot be ſo unjuſt and partial, as to charge the *Romaniſts* only with the fault, though they are deepeſt in the Guilt, and more blameable than the reſt) that all take Sanctuary, and think to juſtifie their ill will one to another this way; that they, from whom they divide and ſeparate themſelves, entertain different Notions of ſome points of Religion, though perchance they be not Eſſential to the Faith; or elſe uſe other Rites in their Religious Worſhip, which yet may be as decent, and as uſeful, and as ſignificant, as if this were to renounce *Chriſtianity*, and to forſake the Communion of the *Catholick* Church.

How has this fond Opinion broken *Chriſtendom* into pieces, and ſhut Unity and Peace out of it! Private Paſſion, and a falſe Zeal corrupting our Judgments and Practiſes ſo far, that inſtead of joyning in the ſame Publick Worſhip and Service of *Chriſt* our Common *Saviour*, and Living together in Holy Communion and Love, we can ſcarce think well one of another; we are afraid of one anothers Company, in a Church at leaſt, as if it were Infectious; we uſe moſt unjuſt and moſt unchriſtian Cenſures; we malign and hate one another to the Death, and, as much as in us lyes, we ſend one another to Hell by our evil and uncharitable ſurmiſes, and by peremptory Sentences of Excommunication.

To prevent which diſmal and bloody effects of Schiſm, the *Apoſtle*, in the beginning of this Chapter, lays

lays down and prescribes a Method, which would prove most effectual, if we understood our Duty and our Interest so much, and had but the Honesty and the Conscience to put it in practise and execution; which is, *to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called*, v. 1. That is, to adorn the Doctrine of *God* our *Saviour* with a suitable Conversation, and as it becomes true followers of *Christ*, to live up to those Excellent Rules and Institutions which he has Publish'd, and not only to make an outward Shew and Profession of *Christianity*, but to justifie and demonstrate the Truth and Power of it by the Example and Practise of the severest Virtues; and especially in this great Instance of it, *With all Lowliness and Meekness, and Long-suffering, to forbear one another in Love*, v. 2. That is, to make some (*a*) allowances for the faileurs, and imperfections, and infirmities of the Understanding, not to be peremptory and dogmatical in matters of Opinion to the prejudice of Unity, nor to be over-fierce and severe in Condemning little mistakes and mis-apprehensions of things, but *to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the bond of Peace*, v. 3. That is, to maintain this Spiritual Communion with all Peaceableness and Moderation; as being all Members of *one Body*, the *Catholick* Church, (*b*) actuated by *one Spirit, and called together in one Hope of our Calling*, v. 4. That is, by virtue of the same common *Christianity*, all alike pretending to the hopes of the same common Salvation; all Disciples of the same *Lord*, and initiated into the same *Faith* by *Baptism*. So long as there is

(*a*) Τοῖς ἀσθενεστέροις δεῖν ὑποκατακλίνεσθαι λόγῳ συγγνώμης, τῷ τὸ τέλειον ἁπανταχοῦ σπάνιον τυγχάνειν. διὸ καὶ ἀλλήλοις δεῖ τὰ σμικρὰ πταίουσι συγγνώμην νέμειν, χαρίζεσθαί τε καὶ συγχωρεῖν ὅσα ἀνθρώπινα —— as in that Excellent Speech of the Emperour *Constantine* to the Bishops, upon the breaking up of the Council of *Nice*, just before their departure to their respective Dioceses: In *Eusebius*, in his Life, *Lib.* 3. *Cap.* 21.

(*b*) 1 Cor. 12. 13.

is no breach made upon the Articles of Faith, and the form of ſound Doctrine is retained in its full ſenſe and meaning, there can be no juſt cauſe for Cenſure and diſ-union: All other differences of Opinion in Matters of Doctrine ſhould be tolerated and forgiven, if they have no evil influence upon Religion, Morality, and Government; if there be no Schiſm or Sedition in practiſe or behaviour, and ſo long as the Unity of Faith is preſerved entire, and kept inviolate, there being as but *one Lord*, ſo but *one Faith*, and *one Baptiſm*.

From which words I ſhall endeavour to make good theſe three following Propoſitions.

1. That the *Doctrine of Faith* is to be derived only from the Revelations of *Chriſt*. *One Lord*, *one Faith*.

2. That the Unity of Faith only reſpects the *Fundamentals* of the *Chriſtian* Religion. And,

3. That all, who are *Baptized*, and conſequently are by this Sacrament of initiation admitted and received into the Communion and Society of *Chriſtians*, are to make Profeſſion of this Faith. *One Faith*, *one Baptiſm*.

1. That the *Doctrine* of *Faith* is to be derived only from the Revelations of *Chriſt*. *One Lord*, *One Faith*.

That it is not in the Power of Humane Wit, how prying and induſtrious ſoever, to raiſe it ſelf up to the Contemplation and Knowledge of Supernatural Truths without the aſſiſtances of Divine Revelation and Grace, is no diſparagement to our Reaſon to acknowledge; it being the effect of an irrational Pride, and a fooliſh and idle Preſumption to think otherwiſe: And particularly, that the Myſteries of the

Chriſtian

Chriſtian Religion lye out of our reach and ken, appears by this unhappy Proof, that upon their firſt publication at that time, when all the Treaſuries and hidden receſſes of Nature were thrown open, and laid common, when nothing ſeemed to eſcape the curioſity of bold and induſtrious Enquirers; and when the Studies of Philoſophy ſeemed to exalt Reaſon to the higheſt pitch and degree of Perfection that it was capable of, they ſtood amazed at the ſtrangeneſs of this *New Doctrine*, not agreeing with their Principles, and no way to be accommodated to any of thoſe numerous *Hypotheſes* which they had taken up; and from this amazement they ſoon advanced to a downright and violent Oppoſition of it, anduſed the utmoſt Forces of their Wit, and of their Eloquence, and of their Learning, to deride, and decry, and ſuppreſs the further growth and ſpreading of it. And the *Jews* too, though they daily turned over the leaves of the *Prophets*, which pointed out in part thoſe Glorious Diſcoveries of the Secrets of *God*, which were to be made in the times of the *Meſſias*, were ſo beſotted and wrought upon by the ſuggeſtions of a groſs Fancy, and an ill-grounded Prejudice, that neither the exact and punctual fulfilling of thoſe Propheſies, even in their minuteſt Circumſtances, nor continued Miracles wrought before their Eyes, the higheſt and moſt rational grounds of Credibility, could prevail upon them to admit a Doctrine, which was ſo much above their mean apprehenſion of things, and ſeemed to thwart and croſs and contradict thoſe Fooliſh *Idea's* and Childiſh Fancies, wherewith they had ſo long pleaſed themſelves.

The World was now to be Inſtructed with a better and more Heavenly Doctrine, and all juſt motives of perſwaſion

perſwaſion were uſed and propoſed to ſatisfie their Reaſon, and to work them up to a full belief of it, enough to lay the whole blame of their Infidelity upon themſelves. The Will of *God* was Revealed by *Chriſt* in plain and eaſie Propoſitions, without the leaſt Ambiguity: And the Authority wherewith they were propoſed, rendred them Infallible; for how could they well doubt of, or deny the truth of a Doctrine, which they ſaw atteſted and confirmed by Omnipotence?

The ground then of our Faith is the Revelation of *God* by *Chriſt*. *My Doctrine is not mine*, ſays our Bleſſed *Saviour*, *but his that ſent me*, *St.* John 7. 16. And *He that ſent me is true*, *and I ſpeak to the World thoſe things which I have heard of him*, *St.* John 8. 26. *And as my Father hath taught me*, *I ſpeak theſe things*, v. 28. *All things that I have heard of my Father*, *I have made known unto you*, Chap. 15. v. 15. *And I have given unto them the words which thou gaveſt me*, *and they have received them*, Chap. 17. v. 8. He is the *Author and Finiſher of our Faith*: He it is, who Commiſſioned his *Apoſtles* to Publiſh the Doctrine which he firſt taught, from him, and in his Name, to go about the World, and make Proſelytes to his Religion, and Proclaim the Saving Virtues and Merits of his Croſs, and the Glories of his Reſurrection. And what one of the number ſays concerning the Inſtitution and Celebration of the Bleſſed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our *Lord*, 1 *Cor.* 11. 23. *I have received of the Lord that which I have delivered to you*, is to be ſaid of the whole complexion and comprehenſion of the Articles of Faith. This was their Profeſſion, whereſoever they went; there was no mixture of their own Fancy and Invention in the

the caſe; (*a*) they were Infallibly ſecured from the leaſt Error in their Doctrine by the Guidance of Gods Spirit; *That which was from the beginning, which they had heard, which they had ſeen with their Eyes, and which they had looked upon, and their hands had handled concerning the Word of Life*, they declared, and nothing elſe: (*b*) That is, they ſpake nothing concerning *Chriſt*, either his Perſon or his Doctrine, but what they were Infallibly aſſured of, what they had heard *Chriſt* ſay, and declare to be his Will, and what they had ſeen him do.

(a) St. John 14. 26. & Ch. 16. 13. 1 St. John 1. 1.

(b) *Nobis nihil ex noſtro arbitrio inducere licet, ſed nec eligere, quod aliquis de arbitrio ſuo induxerit. Apoſtolos Domini habemus auctores, qui nec ipſi quicquam ex ſuo arbitrio, quod inducerent, elegerunt; ſed acceptam à Chriſto Diſciplinam fideliter nationibus adſignaverunt.* Tertullianus *de Præſcripti: hæret.* Cap. 6. *Expeditè præſcribimus adulteris noſtris, illam eſſe regulam veritatis, quæ veniat à Chriſto, tranſmiſſa per comites ipſius, quibus aliquanto poſteriores diverſi iſti Commentatores probabuntur.* Apologet. Cap. 47.

The Foundation of Faith being thus eſtabliſhed, I ſhall hence deduce theſe following Concluſions.

1. That no Doctrine can or ought to be propoſed as an Article of Faith, but what *Chriſt* has revealed, and what the *Apoſtles* from him have declared in their Preaching, and in their Writings.

2. That ſince the times of the *Apoſtles*, and the Sealing up the Canon of Scripture, no new Doctrine can or ought to be added, as Eſſential to the *Chriſtian* Faith.

3. That it is not in the Power of the Church in general, much leſs of any particular Church, of what denomination ſoever, to lay down any Doctrine, as neceſſary to be believed in order to Salvation, but what is expreſly Revealed, or clearly deduced out of the Writings of the New Teſtament, and was acknowledged in the firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*.

1. That

1. That no Doctrine can or ought to be propoſed, as an Article of Faith, but what *Chriſt* has Revealed, and what the *Apoſtles* from him have declared in their Preaching, and in their Writings.

All Articles of Faith relying upon the Revelation of *God* by *Chriſt*, as we cannot deny *ſuch a Teſtimony, which* God *has given of his Son, without making him a Lyar*, as St. *John* ſpeaks, firſt *Epiſt. 5th. Chap. 10th. ver.* So nothing more can be required of us, than to believe that, and that only, as neceſſary and with a Divine Faith, which he has been pleaſed to Reveal: (*a*) Becauſe what he has thought fit to Communicate of the Mind and Will of *God*, in Order to the conſtituting a Church upon Earth, and bringing us to Heaven, muſt needs be judged ſufficient, as it is indeed moſt ſufficient, to effect this double end.

(a) *Hanc tibi foſſam determinavit ipſe, (Chriſtus) qui te non vult aliud credere, quam quod inſtituit, ideóq; nec quærere.* Tertul. de Præſcript. Cap. 10.

Now, becauſe *Chriſt* did not leave behind him a Syſtem or Body of Articles in Writing, (moſt of which refer to himſelf, that is, as well to that wonderful οἰκονομία, or Diſpenſation and ἐνανθρωπήσεως πολιτεία, as the *Greek* Fathers call it, and ſo comprehending his Conception and Birth, and the ſeveral Acts of his Life, and his laſt Sufferings; as that He was Conceived by the *Holy Ghoſt*, Born of a pure and ſpotleſs Virgin, did ſuch and ſuch ſtupendious Miracles, Suffered by way of Atonement and Expiation for the Sins of the whole World; roſe again from the Dead, and aſcended Bodily into Heaven, and the like, as to the θεολογία, or tranſcendent Excellencies of the Divine Nature; as that *He is the only Begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all Worlds*, and God *of the ſame Subſtance with the Father*, and the like, which were to be the Fundamentals of his Religion) but left the buſineſs of propagating a Church, which he had

had Founded by his Blood, to his *Apoſtles*, to them we are to have recourſe, (*o*) as to the Infallible Relators of his Mind and Will.

(*o*) V. Tertullianum *de Præſcript. hæret.* Cap. 21.

Here then is to be the Tryal of a Doctrine propoſed to us, as a Matter of Faith. Is it any where to be found in the Diſcourſes of our Bleſſed *Saviour*, preſerved in the Hiſtory of the Goſpels? Did the *Apoſtles* teach it their firſt Converts? Is it agreeable to, or founded upon true *Apoſtolick Tradition?* Is this Tradition un-interrupted, and derived down pure from the firſt Ages of the Church? Was it received univerſally by the whole number of *Chriſtians* in their time? Is it any where to be met with in their Writings, either in expreſs terms, or by a juſt, and clear, and neceſſary conſequence? For though the Doctrine of the *Chriſtian* Religion was Preach'd and received before any word of the *New Teſtament* was Penned; yet to ſay, the *Apoſtles* taught many Points of Doctrine, which they did not put down in Writing, and much more, ſuch Points, as conſequentially overthrow and deſtroy the plain ſenſe and letter of the Text, is a very groundleſs and ſcandalous Suppoſition: And beſides, the injury done to the Scriptures, which contain in them all Points neceſſary to be believed, is confuted by the Authors of it, who pretend to fetch Proofs of their fanſied tenents out of them: There having been that great Veneration ſhewn to the Inſpired Writings in all Ages, that Hereticks, and other kind of Innovators have choſen rather to bend and warp the Scripture, and pervert its true ſenſe and meaning in favour of their tenents, than not ſeem to have the Countenance of its Authority.

2. That ſince the times of the *Apoſtles*, and the Sealing up of the Canon of Scripture, no New Doctrine

can or ought to be added as Eſſential to the *Chriſtian* Religion.

For all which is Eſſential to the Faith was delivered by the *Apoſtles* to the Church at firſt, otherwiſe the Rule of Faith had been imperfect, and would have had ſomething wanting to its completion, to be ſupplyed in after-times; which is to caſt a ſlur and a blemiſh upon thoſe firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*, which were fully Inſtructed in all things fit and neceſſary for *Chriſtians* to know and believe by the *Apoſtles* themſelves, without the ſtamp of whoſe Authority no Doctrine could be Authentick. For what ever was believed as neceſſary, derived only from them, as the Inſtruments, which *Chriſt* made uſe of to convey his Doctrine to the World; which they did fully, and carefully, and ſucceſsfully by the mighty aids of his Spirit, according to the truſt repoſed in them. They eſtabliſh'd the belief of the *Chriſtian* Religion in the hearts of the Faithful: They concealed nothing of the mind and will of God. Churches were formed and modelled according to their direction and command; and *Epiſcopal* Government with the inferiour and ſubordinate Orders ſettled for the better preſervation of Unity and Communion. The Faith of *Chriſt* was profeſſed and acknowledged, as they taught and delivered it. Their Writings were among them, exactly agreeing in all things with what they had Preach'd, and were to be the ſtanding Monuments of the will of *Chriſt*, Regiſtred by their Pens, to direct all ſucceeding Generations of *Chriſtians* in their belief, and in their practiſe. After their Deceaſe no new Revelation was to be expected, only a delivering down of the ſame *Apoſtolical* Doctrine to after-ages, in which the Faith, nay, the Curioſity of all *Chriſtians* ought to acquieſce.

3. That

3. That it is not in the Power of the Church in general, much leſs of any particular Church, of what denomination ſoever, to lay down any Doctrine, as neceſſary to be believed in order to Salvation, but what is expreſly revealed, or clearly deduced out of the writings of the New Teſtament, and was acknowledged in the firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*. For if ſo, they muſt pretend to the ſame Authority, and produce clear and convictive Evidences of ſuch Revelations to make them credible, and lay an Obligation upon the Conſciences of all *Chriſtians* to receive their Propoſitions under the grievous penalty of otherwiſe diſobeying the voice and will of *God*. This dotage indeed *Montanus*, and ſuch kind of *Enthuſiaſts*, have been guilty of: But their pretenſions were rejected as dreams of folly, ariſing from miſ-interpretations of Scripture, as if there were to be new Revelations made in after-times by way of ſuper-addition and ſupplement, (into which errors they were led by their pride and conceitedneſs, and an ill habit and temper of body) and the Authority of the Scriptures, and the Præſcription of the precedent Ages were juſtly objected againſt them. (c) All that the Church can pretend to is only this, not to define and make a new Article of Faith, but only to declare what before was revealed and acknowledged, though not ſo clearly underſtood, till the iniquity of the times made it neceſſary for the Church in a general Council to interpoſe her Authority in the determination of Controverſies of Faith. And where this pretence is true, her Authority ought to be ſubmitted to, and her Propoſals embraced: That is, if the Doctrine propoſed be the juſt and natural reſult of an Article of Faith expreſly revealed in the Scripture, and underſtood in

(c) See *Vincentius Lirinenſis* excellently treating of this Argument in the 32 Chapter of his *Commonitorium*.

that manner, and acknowledged as such by the first *Christians*, Contemporaries and Successors of the *Apostles*, and constantly received from that time downward by the generality of *Christians*. For the opposition of a few after the first and general reception of a necessary truth is not considerable; who through prejudice, or out of design to raise troubles in the Church, or out of Ambition to be the Chiefs of a Faction, or through a pretended dissatisfaction at the Mysteriousness of it, or through wantonness of Wit and Humour, have been so obstinate, as not only to refuse to make the same acknowledgment, but to maintain the contrary with violence.

To all which, that is, to Scripture, Apostolick Tradition, and universal consent, the Fathers Assembled in the four first General Councils had regard in their determinations against the Hereticks of their time. They only fixt what was Catholick Doctrine, and what was believed in the Ages before they were born. They founded their Declarations upon Scripture and universal Tradition: And to silence all Disputes, and to prevent Schism, and to direct their own and after-times in the belief and understanding of the great Mysteries of Faith, they reduced the Doctrine of it, as it lyes scattered in several parts of Scripture, into a form of plain and intelligible words, and enlarged themselves in the explication of it, as we shall see anon: (*a*) It being the very same Faith which the *Apostles* Preach'd, and which the Scriptures hold out to us. All their *Anathema's* are founded upon that of St. *Paul*, Gal. 1. 8,9. *Though we or an Angel from Heaven Preach any other Gospel unto you, then*

(*a*) Τοῦτο γὰρ οἱ πλείονες ἐδίδαξαν, παρὰ τῶν Ἀποστόλων διαδεξάμενοι τὸ τῆς Οἰκονομίας μυστήριον. Theodotus Ancyranus *in expositione symboli* Nicæni Romæ 8. 1669 Speaking of the Union of the two Natures in the single Person of *Christ*, *pag.* 26.

then what we have Preached unto you, let him be accurſed. If any Man Preach any other Goſpel unto you, than that you have received, let him be accurſed. And if there cannot be another Goſpel, there cannot be another Faith: The Goſpel being the Revelation of *God* by *Chriſt*, and that Revelation full and made but once in the days of his fleſh. Whatever therefore the Church believes or propoſes to be believed, muſt neceſſarily be founded upon ſuch a Revelation; and conſequently, that Doctrine, if it be of Faith, muſt Originally derive from *Chriſt* and his *Apoſtles*; the Doctrine of Faith being nothing elſe but what *He* and They from Him have delivered, and conſequently, one and the ſame, *yeſterday, to day, and for ever*: That is, in all Ages. Now, into the Unity of this Faith, and wherein it conſiſts, I ſhall enquire, in the next place, which brings me to

The ſecond Propoſition, That the *Unity* of *Faith* only reſpects the Fundamentals of the *Chriſtian* Religion.

In order to the clearing of which, I will premiſe theſe two things:

1. That there was a form of words containing a brief Summary of the Principles of the *Chriſtian Religion* in the Apoſtles times. This ſeems to be preſuppoſed in the writings of the New Teſtament, and moſt probably may be the ſame with the ὑποτύπωσις τῶν ὑγιαινόντων λόγων, or *form of ſound words*, which St. *Paul* adviſes *Timothy* to *hold faſt*, 2 *Epiſt.* 1. 13. and the καλὴ παραθήκη, or the *good depoſitum or Doctrine committed to his truſt*; which undoubtedly refers to the grounds and fundamentals of Chriſtianity, purely and abſtractedly conſidered as the rule of Faith, to which he was preciſely to adhere againſt all the noiſe and clamours

clamours of vain and idly-curious talkers, and the contradictions of the *Gnosticks*, (the Hereticks of that Age, who not content with the expreſs and plain Revelations of the Goſpel, pretended to higher and greater degrees and meaſures of Divine knowledge) as is plain from 1 *Tim.* 6. 20. *O* Timothy, *keep that which is committed to thy truſt, avoiding profane and vain bablings, and oppoſitions of Science, falſly ſo called*: It being moſt agreeable in the nature of the thing, if there were no places of Scripture to countenance and make out the ſuppoſition, that the Apoſtles ſhould, for the uſe of the new Converts, put the neceſſary Articles of Faith together into certain heads of Diſcourſe, and that to theſe they ſhould refer as to a *Rule*, *Gal.* 6. 16. *Phil.* 3. 16. as to *a form of Doctrine*, Rom. 6. 17. as to *the firſt Principles of the Oracles of God*, Heb. 5. 12. as *to the Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt*, Heb. 6. 1. and *as to the Faith once delivered to the Saints*, Jude v. 3. All which ſeveral circumlocutions are expreſſive of the ſame thing, and ſuppoſe thoſe Doctrines, whatſoever they were, univerſally taught, and as univerſally acknowledged and received.

But (*o*) whether this form be the ſame with that, which bears the name of the *Apoſtles Creed*, (which undoubtedly in the main is very ancient, and moſt probably as ancient as their time; the Church, in ſucceeding Ages indeed, to ſerve and maintain the intereſts and neceſſities of Religion againſt the innovations and aſſaults of Hereſie, adding ſeveral clauſes and expreſſions to it) is not here to be diſputed at large. But however this is certain, that long before the times of the Council at *Nice* there was a Confeſſion of Faith in uſe among Chriſtians as the Standard of Catholick verity,

(*o*) But of this ſee the Appendix.

verity, as is demonſtrable from the Teſtimonies of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and others: which Creed (*o*) (though there might be ſome variation of expreſſion in it, that is, (*oo*) might be more contracted or enlarged at different times, yet agreeing in the main as to the ſenſe and wording too of moſt of the Articles) being of general uſage, and of great Authority, deriving neither the one nor the other from the Canon or Decree of any Council, it may more than probably be ſuppoſed from the ſpreading and univerſal reception of it in the Churches of the *Eaſt* and *Weſt*, and from the general ſilence of its firſt eſtabliſhment, that it was delivered down from the very firſt Ages, as having the Apoſtles for its Authors.

(*o*) *Sciendum ſanè eſt, quod in Eccleſiæ Romanæ ſymbolo non habetur additum, deſcendit ad inferna: Sed neque in Orientis Eccleſiis habetur hic ſermo. Vis tamen verbi eadem videtur eſſe in eo, quod ſepultus dicitur.* Rufinus.

(*oo*) Rufinus *Presbyter Eccleſiæ Aquileienſis in expoſitione ſymboli Apoſtolici. Priuſquam incipiam de ipſis ſermonum virtutibus diſputare, illud non importunè commonendum Puto, quod in diverſis Eccleſiis aliqua in his verbis inveniuntur adjecta. In Eccleſiâ tamen Urbis* Romæ *hoc non deprehenditur factum. Quod ego propterea eſſe arbitror, quod neque hereſis ulla illic ſumpſit exordium: Et mos inibi ſervatur antiquus, eos qui gratiam baptiſmi ſuſcepturi ſunt publicè, id eſt fidelium populo audiente, ſymbolum reddere: Et utique adjectionem hujus ſaltem ſermonis eorum qui præcefferunt in fide, non admittit auditus. In cæteris autem locis, quantum intelligi datur, propter nonnullos hæreticos addita quædam videntur, per quæ novellæ doctrinæ ſenſus crederetur excludi.*

Againſt this if it be objected, that if ſuch a Creed had been extant at that time, the ſame reſpect and reverence would have been given to it as to their other writings, and conſequently that there would have been no addition nor alteration of it, much leſs any new form, as the *Nicene* may ſeem to be, framed and introduced, as if the other had been defective, it may be fully and ſatisfactorily replyed, that whoſoever conſiders the eſtate of the Church in the Southern parts of the Empire; (*p*) that is, in *Egypt* and *Libya*, and *Thebais*, under *Conſtantine*, how it was rent and torn, and the diſſolution of its very Being threatned

(*p*) *V.* Euſebium *de vitâ* Conſtantini. Lib. 3. Cap. 4.

threatned by the new and blaſphemous Opinions of *Arius* and his numerous followers, he will quickly find, that the Fathers, who were conven'd at *Nice* to put a ſtop to thoſe Commotions, and allay the fury of the Tempeſt, which began to ſhake the foundations of the Government as well as of Religion, lay under a neceſſity of fencing about the hitherto uncontradicted and eſtabliſhed Doctrine of *Chriſtianity* with a larger and more explicite form of Words, retaining for the moſt part (though with ſome little interpolation referring to the *Arian* controverſies, which they hoped to put an end to this way) the old form, which *Euſebius*, Biſhop of *Cæſarea* in *Paleſtine*, preſented the Emperour and that Council, as having received it from the Biſhops his Predeceſſors, and which himſelf and the *Catechumeni* were firſt taught, and profeſt at their Baptiſm; and by theſe means (*q*) adding a Commentary and explication of what was more cloſely couch'd in the Apoſtolical form, which they did not pretend to alter, but to draw forth in its full meaning and conſequence.

(*q*) Epiphanius *in Anchorato verſus finem.* Αὕτη μὲν ἡ πίστις παρεδόθη ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων, καὶ ἐν Ἐκκλησίᾳ τῇ ἁγίᾳ ἀπὸ πάντων ὁμοῦ τῶν ἁγίων Ἐπισκόπων ὑπὲρ τριακοσίων δέκα τῶν δεῦρο μόν.

For it was not enough for the *Arians* to ſay, which is the Plea of the *Socinians* at this day, that they acknowledge the *Apoſtles Creed*, and are willing to ſubſcribe to it, unleſs at the ſame time they will admit the full ſenſe of the words with the ſeveral propoſitions, that are neceſſarily included in them, as they are and have been underſtood by the Catholick Church from the firſt times of Chriſtianity. For if they pretend to ſay, they believe *Chriſt* to be the only begotten Son of God in a private ſenſe of their own,

own, to the prejudice of his God-head, that is, if they will not for all this believe him to be God, begotten of his Father before all Worlds, but fancy there was a time, when he was not, and so make him a Creature, though the most glorious and perfect of all the Creation, and so deny him to be of the same substance with the Father; what is this but to destroy the Faith of Christ, which is built upon this Foundation, to make a mock-profession of Faith, to retain the Apostles words only, and deny in the mean while the truth of the Doctrine, which they were intended to establish? And so afterward when the Heresie of *Macedonius* brake out, threatning new troubles, and distracting the minds of the People with their Blasphemous Novelties. (*a*) The Article concerning the *Holy Ghost* was enlarged by the Assessors of the first General Council held at *Constantinople* under *Theodosius* the Emperor; by which enlargement all good Christian People were to be established in the belief of the *Catholick* Doctrine, declared so to be, according to Scripture and Universal Tradition.

(a) V. Theodotum Ancyranum *in expos. symb.* Nic. pag. 88. *Et professionem fidei à Romano Pontifice haberi solitam in libro diurno Pontif. Roman.* pag. 35. --- *Secundum* Constantinopolitanum *adæquè Sanctum; certum quoque quinquaginta Patrum Concilium sub Imperialis memoriæ majore* Theodosio, *in Regiam Urbem concurrens, quod symbolo deesse putabatur exposuit, & gratiâ Spiritûs Sancti in lustrante, Deum esse Spiritum Sanctum, Patrique & filio, utpote consubstantialem, coadorandum annexit.*

By these mighty Arguments they convinced the Hereticks, and justly subjected them to the Punishment which their refractorines and guilt deserved. They settled the Peace of the Church, and secured the Faith from the like assaults in after-times. Their Creed was the Test by which they discerned Truth from Heresie, and it was received and acknowledged

as such, (*b*) by all the Orthodox *Christians* in the Churches of *Greece*, the *lesser Asia*, *Syria*, and *Egypt*, and taught the *Catechumeni* as a necessary qualification of their admission into the number of the Faithful, which is the true reason that the other short form, which had been in use hitherto (the sum and substance of it with all its necessary deductions being transfused into this) began to be dis-used, and in process of time wholly omitted and left out of their Liturgies. Whereas at *Rome*, and in the other Churches of the *West*, where those Controversies about matters of Faith, which had exercised the Wits and Curiosities of the *Orientals*, (whose prying and restless Genius drove them upon those subtilties) never were admitted, or made no considerable progress among them; they continued constant and steddy in the profession of the Ancient Faith, and therefore stuck to, and retained the old form of words, as they are summ'd up in the *Creed*, which we call the *Apostles*, with some little addition, and needed not a larger explication.

(*b*) Athanasius *Epistolâ ad* Jovianum *Imperatorem, de fide.* Of the *Nicene* Creed, ἦν μὲν οὖν αὕτη πανταχοῦ κατὰ πᾶσαν Ἐκκλησίαν ἀδόλως γινωσκομένη τε καὶ κηρυττομένη. And a little after, ταῦτα μὲν ἐξ αἰῶνός ἐστι κηρυττόμενα, ταύτην δὲ οἱ ἐν Νικαίᾳ συνελθόντες ὡμολόγησαν πατέρες· καὶ ταύτης σύμψηφοι τυγχάνουσι πᾶσαι αἱ πανταχοῦ κατὰ τόπον Ἐκκλησίαι. ---- Theodotus Ancyran. ἐκτιθέμενος καθάπερ τινα κανόνα. *pag.* 30. ὥστε χριστιανῶν ἀλλότριός ἐστι πᾶς ὁ τῆς ἐκθέσεως ταύτης παρηλλαγμένα φρονῶν --- *p.* 31. *Si quis hanc fidem non habet, Catholicus dici non potest; quia Catholicam non tenet fidem, & ideò alienus est & profanus, & adversus veritatem rebellis.* V. *Fidem S.* Ambrosii *apud* Lambec. Lib. 2. Comment. de Bibl. Cæsar. Cap. 5. p. 268.

2. It follows from this, that (*o*) the Doctrine of Faith must necessarily be one and the same every where, according to the assertion of the Text: It was the *common Faith*, *Tit.* 1. 4. not appropriated to any particular Sect; but it lay in common, and open to all: The whole Faith, that is, so much as was necessary to denominate them true Believers, was received by all without any difference in the main points of it. For how could it be otherwise while they adhered

(*o*) *S.* Leo *in sermone* 23. *qui est de nativitate Domini* IV. *Nisi una est fides non est.*

hered ſo cloſe to the Doctrine of the *Apoſtles*, who all Preach'd the ſame Faith in the moſt diſtant parts of the World, between which there could not poſſibly be, as the times ſtood then, that is, before the Polarity or directive vertue of the Load-ſtone was known, any communication or intercourſe? There was a perfect agreement and harmony of Confeſſions among all who had embraced the Doctrine of *Chriſtianity*. The *Chriſtians* here in *Britain* believed no otherwiſe than thoſe at *Jeruſalem*, and thoſe in *India*, whom St. *Thomas* Converted, and all who lived in the intermediate ſpaces between thoſe two vaſtly diſtant extreams, which were the boundaries of the then known World, exactly agreeing with both. Though they differed in Language, Cuſtoms, Laws, Behaviour, and way of Living, and were under different Governments, yet they all held the ſame thing: Which Argument is excellently handled by *Irenæus*, in his *1ſt. Book*, *3d. Chap. adv. Hæreſes*. There cannot be a more convictive Argument of the truth of the ſenſe of the Articles of Faith, which the Hereticks reject, than the profeſſion of them in all *Churches* of the World. For how came this univerſal Conſent eſtabliſh'd, but from the ſoundneſs of the Doctrine, and the Authority of its firſt Publiſhers? Among that great variety of Opinions, which prevailed every where, there were certain eſſential points of Faith, wherein they were all unanimous, and ſo long as they were held and maintained, a liberty of Judgment and Opinion was allowed in leſſer matters, witneſs thoſe Ancient forms before-mentioned, long before the Civil Power took the *Chriſtian* Religion into its protection; which whoſoever admitted and profeſſed, was received into their Communion. So that

from this *Unity* of *Faith*, which was received every where by the whole number of Christians, except some obstinate Heretical Dissenters, who were a small and inconsiderable Party at first, in comparison of the rest, the *Christian Church* was styled (*o*) *Catholick*, or Universal, just as the great Ocean is one and the same, though it receives particular denominations from the several shores which it washes, as the *Brittish*, *Cantabrian*, *Atlantick*, and the like, and not from any pretended subjection to one Sovereign Pastor: And the word *Catholick* became another name for *Orthodox*; and the Bishops afterwards subscribed themselves Bishops of the *Catholick* Church of such a place, as founded on the Doctrine of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, Universally received throughout the World, and by vertue of the same Faith in Communion with all *Christians*.

(*o*) *Constantine*, in his Letter to the Churches concerning the *Nicene* Council, *Apud* Euseb. *in vitâ ipsius*. lib. 3. cap. 18. --- Μίαν εἶναι τὴν καθολικὴν αὐτοῦ ἐκκλησίαν βεβούλησαι. ἧς εἰ καὶ ταμάλιστα εἰς πολλοὺς καὶ διαφόρους τόπους τὰ μέρη διήρηται, ἀλλ' ὅμως ἑνὶ πνεύματι, τουτέστι τῷ θείῳ βουλήματι, θάλπεται.

Upon these two Suppositions I shall lay down these following Propositions: That,

1. Diversity of Opinions in matters of Religion of less moment does not interrupt and dissolve the *Unity* of Faith.

Opinions arise either from want of Evidence in the things themselves, which causes a fluctuation and unsettlement in the mind, as not knowing where to fix and rest; to which we yield a wavering kind of assent, more or less, according to greater or lesser degrees of Probabilities; or else from the weakness of the understanding, which not being able to take a comprehensive view of things, and resolve them into their first Principles and Original Causes; or for want of a sure Foundation, whether of Nature or Reason, or Authority, or Revelation, takes up with Arguments and motives of assent, which fall short of certainty,

certainty, and which cannot quiet the mind, and ſecure it from all ſuſpicion and fear of the contrary. And indeed conſidering the great variety of mens tempers and complexions, Education and Intereſts; and the greater or leſſer degrees of Knowledge, Induſtry, Curioſity, and the like; there is a Moral impoſſibility, that Opinions ſhould be one and the ſame. And where *God* has left a liberty, no Power upon Earth can oblige the Conſcience and Underſtanding to admit them any otherwiſe than as Opinions: That is, either as true in their kind, but far from the Infallibility of Divine Revelations; or as *piè credibilia:* Or as means and inſtruments of Agreement and Uniformity in Judgment, to prevent Schiſm and Confuſion; ſo as yet no one particular Church ſhall preſcribe to another, but leave each to its liberty of ſecuring their peace and quiet by what Confeſſions they judge beſt for that end; and nothing be impoſed as a matter of Doctrine, which thwarts the Ancient *Chriſtian* Doctrine and the *Catholick* Tradition of the *Church.*

2. All truths are not fundamental and neceſſary to be believed with the ſame firmneſs of aſſent: For ſeveral Propoſitions may be true and uſeful, and yet not neceſſary and eſſential to the Faith; the ignorance or diſ-belief of which does not throw a man out of the Communion of the *Church.* The neglect of this diſtinction has been one great cauſe of the troubles and turmoils of *Chriſtendom*, whilſt fierce and eager Diſputants have been engaged in the defence of ſeveral tenents, which have no neceſſary dependance on the Doctrine of *Faith*, and which are not determined in the *Scriptures*, and by reaſon of their difficulty, and the various apprehenſions and prejudices of men not like

like ever to be fully and satisfactorily decided; and which indeed are but niceties and trifling subtilties in comparison; while they put a greater value upon them than the nature and matter of them will bear; and whilst they Sacrifice Unity and the Peace of the *Church*, and the grand and real concerns of Religion to Passion and Humour.

3. Much less are doubtful Consequences and Philosophical Opinions to be admitted and reckoned in the number of *Fundamentals*. At first certainly, and for several Ages together, there was no great subtilty required in order to be a good *Christian*. The Institutions of Christianity were not Laborious and perplext: Nothing was required but a firm assent of the mind to a few Propositions, whose matter indeed was Mysterious, but what had the highest ground of Credibility to make the assent to them just and rational; but when once a bold Curiosity, and an unlawful, and an over-affected subtilty made men depart (p) from the simplicity of Faith, and Religion, instead of being the Rule of Life and Discipline, became an Art of Disputing; and Scripture and Antiquity no longer made the Judges of Controversies, but every mans particular Reason, though never so much byassed and perverted by the prepossessions of fancy, and by the heat and influence of his Passions; then *Articles* of *Faith* began to multiply, and every nicety and far-fetch'd consequence was called by that name, and Magisterially imposed, and the Philosophy of *Aristotle* and *Plato* was brought in to their assistance, till the substance of *Christianity* was even lost in the Quarrel, and the very Foundations of it undermined, and Faith swallowed up in wantonness of Wit, and Peace shut out of the World by Faction and Schism.

(p) *Theodotus* speaking of the *Nestorians* of his time ---- Ὁμωνυμίαν ποιήσαντες τὸ μυστήριον, τέχνη λόγων ἐπιθολώσαντες τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν τὴν ἁπλότητα. pag. 7.

The

The reſult was, that they were the worſe Chriſtians; more talkative and curious perhaps, but leſs ſtrict and Religious, and Charitable; nay, leſs knowing than they were before they let looſe the Reins to their fancy, and leapt over thoſe boundaries which *God* and the *Church* had ſet.

4. Whatſoever was not Fundamental in the *Apoſtles* time, cannot be ſo now. If it be a true way of defining an *Article* of *Faith*, that it was revealed by *Chriſt* to the *Apoſtles*, and as ſuch, impoſed by them upon their *Proſelytes*, without the embracing of which they could not be *Chriſtians*; and that it is to be found in the writings which they left behind them, either expreſly or by neceſſary conſequence: Then the contrary alſo, that is, whatſoever is not found in their writings, either directly, or by juſt and neceſſary conſequence, and was not propoſed to the firſt Believers, cannot be Fundamental; and conſequently no one is bound to believe any Doctrine, but what was then revealed, and afterward acknowledged by the *Catholick Church*; and what-ever propoſal is made by the *Church*, is no farther to be believed, than as it is conſonant to the *Scripture* and the Doctrine of the *Apoſtles*; this declaration not being of it ſelf ſufficient to make an *Article* of *Faith*, but as it is founded upon *Scripture* and *Apoſtolical* Authority. How had the Peace of *Chriſtendom* been ſtill preſerved, if theſe Rules had been followed and kept in after-ages? That is, if new Opinions, whereof ſome are very dangerous, to which the *Chriſtian Church* was a ſtranger for ſeveral Centuries of Years, and all uncertain at the beſt, if meer fancies, to which Superſtition and Ignorance have given Birth; and if the niceties and ſubtilties of the *Schools*, and things impoſſible to be throughly

throughly known, and matters of meer ſpeculation, that tend to the diſſervice of Religion, and do not flow in the leaſt from its Principles, had not been adopted Articles and Points of Faith, (all which we juſtly object to the Church of *Rome*) and made neceſſary conditions of Communion. How might we have adored before the ſame Altars, and *gone together to the Houſe of God as Friends*; and have been partakers of the Myſteries of the *Body and blood of our Saviour*, if they had not determined the manner of the *preſence* of *Chriſt* in the *Sacrament*, and brought in a new Doctrine, which contradicts the whole circle of Sciences, and the ſenſe and experience of all mankind; and tyed all others to believe an unnatural ſenſe of the words of the *Inſtitution*? making the differences irreconcileable by their *Trent* Canons, and ſhutting out all poſſible hope of Peace, till *God* ſhall open the eyes of the *Chriſtian Princes* of *that Communion* to ſee the fallacies and cheats of the *Court*, and the errors and corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, to call a free and truly General *Council*, to debate the differences which are now on foot, to the great ſcandal of *Chriſtianity*, upon the Principles of Scripture, Primitive Antiquity, and genuine Apoſtolical Tradition, and which conſiderations of Worldly Intereſt and Grandeur keep up; this being the only way left to reſtore Unity to the divided *Catholick Church*.

'Tis the glory as well as happineſs of the Church of *England*, that the Rites ſhe uſes in her Religious Worſhip are decent and Solemn, and every way ſerving the purpoſes of Religion; that her Goverment is Apoſtolical, that her eſtabliſhed Liturgy is according to the Primitive Standard, and which no wiſe and good man can juſtly be offended at, unleſs perchance,

chance, he thinks this a juſt reaſon, becauſe it is a ſet form; that ſhe holds nothing as neceſſary and eſſential to Faith, but what was held ſo in the firſt Ages of the *Church*, and can be proved out of the *Scriptures*; that ſhe rejects no Tradition that can prove it ſelf to be *Apoſtolical*; that ſhe receives the Articles of the *Catholick Faith*, held Anciently for ſuch, in their received ſenſe, and as they are laid down in the three *Creeds*, and admits all, who receive them, into her Communion; that her determinations of Opinions in her Articles are modeſt, and far from the high-flown pretence of Infallibility, and deſigned as an Inſtrument of Union; that ſhe is willing to communicate with *Chriſtians* of what *denomination* ſoever, where the terms of the *Communion* are Lawful, ſo as it may be done without ſin, without prejudice to truth, and the Fundamentals of *Church Government* confirmed by univerſal Practiſe and Canons of Councils, and without violating the Rights and Priviledges of the *Catholick Church*, as well as her own in particular. Let the *Romaniſts* ſingle out any one of her profeſſed Tenents, which ſhe holds as eſſential to *Faith*, and neceſſary to Salvation, which is not exactly agreeable to the firſt Antiquity. They cannot deny, that ſhe holds nothing amiſs herein; only they pretend, that ſhe does not hold enough: That is, that we reject Tranſubſtantiation, and the Sacrifice of the *Maſs*, Invocation of Saints and Angels, Worſhipping of Images; that we do not admit the *Pope* to be the viſible Head and Monarch of the *Church*, and the *Vicar* of *Chriſt*, and that it is neceſſary to Salvation to be Subject to him, and the like: All which are meer Fancies and Uſurpations. But if the *Primitive Chriſtians* were in the right, if a good Life (for that is a Fun-

damental and moſt neceſſary point of *Chriſtianity*, and without which all our belief, be it never ſo Orthodox, will ſignifie nothing) added to an entire and ſound Faith, carried them to Heaven, we may be ſecure; it is enough for us to follow them and tread in their ſteps: We retain the ſame Faith; the Reformation of the *Church* of *England* conformed it ſelf to their Practiſe and Example. Our *Church* has been the great Eye-ſore of *Rome* ever ſince, and eſpecially of late, when they had ſuch mighty hopes of prevailing, to which the froward and perverſe humour of the Non-Conformiſts, and chiefly the *Presbyterian* Faction, the Original and ſource of all our Church-diviſions, have given ſo great advantage. So that the Wiſe and moſt Learned King *James*, of Bleſſed Memory, may ſeem to have been a Prophet in this too, That if ever the *Pope* were brought into *England*, it would be upon the back of a *Puritan*, as well as in that remarkable ſaying, No Biſhop, no King; the truth of which was moſt ſadly juſtified and made out in the late moſt bloudy and unnatural Wars, and by the moſt horrid Murder of the beſt of Princes, *Charles* the Martyr, whoſe Righteous Soul muſt needs be troubled (if any thing of pity, which is a troubleſom Paſſion, can be ſuppoſed to reach the Bleſſed) at our preſent Diſtractions, and the diſmal conſequences of them. They envy her Beauty and Order, the diſcreet Piety of her Service, and the Regularity and exactneſs of her Diſcipline, and the Apoſtolicalneſs of her Government, and the flouriſhing of her Univerſities. This makes them rage and ſwell, and for want of better Proofs and Arguments, accuſe and arraign, as guilty of Hereſie and Schiſm, and Innovation, the pureſt and moſt *Apoſtolical Church*

of

of the World. But wiſe and conſiderate men are not to be frighted out of their Senſes, and out of their Religion with hard and big words, and with reproachful Language. The diſſolute and debauched may eaſily be reconciled, as the new word is, to a Religion that is ſo favourable to them, and gives them hopes of going to Heaven after a careleſs and wretched Life, if upon a Sick Bed they begin to be afraid, and profeſs a little ſorrow, and can but ſend for a Prieſt, and be Abſolved; and the ignorant and weak may be wrought upon by little tricks and pieces of Sophiſtry, and cheated and trapanned out of a *Church*, the Doctrine of which they did not throughly underſtand. For it is impoſſible for one who underſtands aright the Grounds and Principles of the *Reformation*, upon which this *National Church* proceeded, ever to renounce her Communion, unleſs he firſt makes Shipwrack of his Honeſty as well as of his Conſcience, and is ſwayed wholly by Worldly reſpects and intereſts. But we need value their Cenſures the leſs, not only becauſe they are unjuſt and uncharitable, but becauſe they involve the *Primitive Chriſtians* in the ſame guilt with us, and all the *Chriſtian Churches* this day in the World, that will not own that grand Fundamental *Article* of the *Roman Faith*, the *Pope's Juriſdiction*, and be content to receive their *Chriſtianity* from *Rome*, and acknowledge all her determinations to be truly and really, as they in the ordinary Court-ſtile call them, *Apoſtolical*. Let us in the name of *God* juſtifie the Doctrine of our *Church* by the ſtrictneſs and exemplarineſs of our Lives, as well as by Arguments and Diſcourſes of Reaſon. Let us *reform* our ſelves not only from the Errors and Superſtitions, but from the Vices that are

too commonly practiſed in *Catholick Countries*, as they call them, though thanks be to the great induſtry and kindneſs, and charity of their *Miſſionaries* of late, they would be content, I will not ſay (though perhaps I might juſtly enough) make it their buſineſs, that Atheiſm and Profaneneſs, and Debauchery ſhould overſpread the Land, rather than that the name of the *Church* of *England* ſhould be any more in remembrance. In times of ſuch defection to *Socinianiſm* and *Popery* on the one hand, and to Fanaticiſm on the other, let us take heed to our ſelves, that we be no way byaſſed or wrought upon to deſert the purity and integrity of the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, as it is taught in this *Church*, in any one point of it; and withal let us ſeriouſly conſider and remember, that it is not enough to believe it with our hearts, unleſs we make open and publick profeſſion of it with our Mouths: Which brings me

To the third Propoſition, That all who are Baptized, and conſequently are by this Sacrament of Initiation admitted and received into the *Communion* and *Society* of *Chriſtians*, are to make profeſſion of this Faith; *One Faith, One Baptiſm.*

It was the undoubted Practiſe of the *Church* in the firſt Ages, that the *Candidates* of *Baptiſm* ſhould make profeſſion of that Faith, into which they were to be Baptized, ſome previous time being allowed for their In-

Inſtruction in the Doctrine of it, as (a) *Ruſinus*, a Presbyter of *Aquileia*, who Lived almoſt 1300 Years ſince, in his Expoſition upon the Creed, aſſures us for his own time, and ſays, it was then an Ancient Cuſtom, and ſo may be juſtly referred to the very times of the *Apoſtles*. 'Tis to be acknowledged indeed, that St. *Luke*, in the Hiſtory of the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, gives us this account only in general, that the new Converts were required to believe in the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; as in the caſe of the Priſonkeeper, Converted by the Preaching of St. *Paul*, *Acts* 16. 31. And that after St. *Philip* had convinced the *Eunuch* by *Preaching to him Jeſus*, and explaining the Propheſies which fore-told him, ſo as that he deſired to become a *Proſelyte* of *Chriſt*, as he had hitherto been of *Moſes* (a Devotion to whoſe Law had brought him to *Jeruſalem*) and had alſo farther acquainted him, that if his requeſt to be Baptized were more than a Complement or Curioſity; if it were real and ſincere; if his Faith proceeded from a thorough conviction of mind, he was qualified for *Baptiſm*, and not otherwiſe: *If thou believeſt with all thy heart, thou mayeſt.*

(a) *Mos inibi* (Romæ) *ſervatur antiquus, eos qui gratiam Baptiſmi ſuſcepturi ſunt, publicè, id eſt, fidelium populo audiente, ſymbolum reddere.* Thus he: *Leo Magnus, Epiſt.* 24. *ad Flavianum Epiſc. contra Eutychem*; *quam eruditionem de Sacris novi ac veteris Teſtamenti paginis acquiſivit, qui ne ipſius quidem ſymboli initia comprehendit*; *& quod per totum mundum omnium regenerandorum voce depromitur, iſtius adhuc ſenis corde non capitur. Epiſtolâ* 97. *ad Monachos Palæſtinos --- quæ tanta extitit decipientis aſtutia, ut obliti Prophetarum & Apoſtolorum, obliti ſymboli ſalutaris & confeſſionis, quam pronunciantes coram multis teſtibus, Sacramentum Baptiſmi ſuſcepiſtis, diabolicis vos illuſionibus ſubderetis?* This for the Weſtern Church. For the like Practiſe of the Eaſtern Churches, we have the Authority of *Euſebius apud Socratem, Hiſt. Eccleſ. lib.* 1. *c.* 5. *& Theodorit. l.* 1. *c.* 12. and of the Fathers of the Council held at *Conſtantinople* under *Theodoſius*, in their Synodical Epiſtle to Pope *Damaſus*, St. *Ambroſe*, and the other Biſhops of the Weſt, ſpeaking of the *Nicene* Creed then eſtabliſhed, but referring alſo to the Ancient Oriental Creed, and the practiſe of the Ages before them. Ταύτην γὰρ καὶ ὑμῖν καὶ ἡμῖν καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς μὴ διαξέφυσι τὸν λόγον τῆς ἀληθοῦς πίστεως συναρέσκειν δεῖ ἣν μάλις πρὸ πρεσβυτάτην τε ἅσαν καὶ ἀκόλουθον τῷ Βαπτίσματι ----- *apud* Theodorit. lib. 5. c. 9. Beſides others elſewhere mentioned.

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The Eunuch makes no other Confeſſion but this, *I believe that Jeſus Chriſt is the Son of God*, Acts 8. 37. (*aa*) But then it is evident, that in this one Propoſition the whole Doctrine of the *Creed* is virtually contained, and that it draws neceſſarily all the other along with it, and that this general belief was deduced into its ſeverals afterwards; and that for a more explicite and particular enumeration of the Articles of the *Chriſtian Faith*, we are to have recourſe to the *Apoſtolical writings*, in which they confirm the new *Chriſtians* in the Faith which they had been taught to believe and acknowledge. By all which it may appear, that,

(*aa*) This Objection was made of old, that is, in St. *Auguſtines* time, as appears by his Book *de fide & operibus*: To which he returns this juſt Anſwer, *cap.* 9. *Nunc ergo placet, ut hoc ſolum homines reſpondeant, & continuò baptizentur, nihil de Spiritu Sancto, nihil de Sanctâ Eccleſiâ, nihil de remiſſione peccatorum, nihil de reſurrectione mortuorum, poſtremò de ipſo Jeſu Chriſto nihil, niſi quia filius Dei eſt; non de incarnatione ejus ex Virgine, de paſſione, de morte crucis, de Sepulturâ, de tertii diei reſurrectione, de aſcenſione ac ſede ad dextram Patris aliquid dicendum eſt Catechizanti, ac profitendum credenti?* By which it appears, that it was his judgment, that a more explicite form was then made, and conſequently that this bare Confeſſion was attended with it, or at leaſt does neceſſarily ſuppoſe and involve it. See more to this purpoſe in the ſame Author at large.

1. Divine Faith in general is neceſſary to the Being of a Chriſtian, and that without it we, to whom the *Goſpel* is Preach'd and made known, cannot pretend either to *Chriſtianity*, or to any hope of Salvation. For, as the Apoſtle St. *Paul* ſays, *if thou ſhalt confeſs with thy mouth the Lord Jeſus, and ſhalt believe in thine heart, that God hath raiſed him from the dead, thou ſhalt be ſaved*, Rom. 8. 9. Where this Article of the *Reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead* ſuppoſes the reſt, and is here expreſly mentioned, as the confirmation of the truth of *Chriſt's* Miſſion and Doctrine.

2. That it is a very grievous Error to fancy, that it is a matter of meer indifference what our belief is in

in particular, and that it is enough, that we believe that *Chriſt* is *the Son of God*, without obliging our ſelves to believe all the juſt and neceſſary conſequences of that Propoſition, meerly becauſe that one ſingle Act of Faith qualified the firſt Converts for Baptiſm; when that only is mentioned, as the Foundation and Baſis of all the reſt, and does Neceſſarily include all the other Doctrinal Points, that depend upon it.

3. That we are obliged to profeſs our belief of the whole Doctrine of *Chriſtianity*, as it lyes in the writings of the *New Teſtament*, which is the Rule of Faith, and as out of them it is briefly ſummed up in the *Creeds*, the explication which the *Catholick Church* has made of that Rule. So that as on the one hand after this acknowledgment, it is unjuſt to demand a more particular and diſtinct account or catalogue of the *Fundamental Articles* of the *Chriſtian Faith* neceſſary to be believed in order to Salvation; (that being ſufficient for the *Catholick Church* in all Ages, which was ſo in the firſt) ſo on the other hand, to believe leſs, and to reject any part of the *Chriſtian Doctrine*, and teach the contrary, is juſtly chargeable with the guilt of Hereſie, and is not the effect of warineſs, but of pride and obſtinacy. The *command of God* to believe the Teſtimony *that he has given of his Son*, and the revelations of his will, and the Divine *Authority*, on which they are founded, are ſufficient Arguments to move us to aſſent to the truth of them, though the matter of them be ſo far above our comprehenſion. They are Myſteries, and neceſſarily muſt be ſuch, and therefore are to be adored and ſubmitted to, with that humility, that befits Creatures conſcious of their own weakneſſes and faileurs,

and

and of the infinite and incomprehenſible Majeſty and perfection of *God*. And if this troubles them, they may as well murmur, and quarrel, and find fault with the diſpenſations of Providence, as obſcure and un-intelligible: There is enough to ſatisfie all, who will be content with juſt Proofs of it, though not to take away all poſſible doubt: and by this means they muſt ſide with the followers of *Epicurus* in their idle and fooliſh, and impious attempts to raze the very notions of a Deity, out of the minds of Men, and extinguiſh and deſtroy all *Religion* out of the World. This is not impoſing upon them, or doing violence to their Reaſon, as they object, only upon this pretence, becauſe the *Myſteries* of *Religion* are not as evident and clear to their underſtanding, as viſible objects are to the Eye in a clear and full light: For then they would ceaſe to be matters of *Faith*, and loſe their name, and fall under the comprehenſion of *Science*. And indeed ſo long as they retain this unreaſonable Principle, that all the *Myſteries* of *Chriſtian Religion* are to be tryed and judged by the narrow Rules of Philoſophy and natural Reaſon (which can be no proper *medium* of proving things only knowable by Revelation) they may well pretend that 'tis not in their own power to change their Opinions, and that 'tis not poſſible for them to bring their underſtandings to admit them. But can they hope, that this ſhould juſtifie their pertinaciouſneſs, and excuſe them at *God's* Tribunal? Is it not to be feared, that the unjuſt prejudices which they entertain, ariſe from a perverſe will, and from obſtinacy and pride, and peeviſhneſs, and not from any diſſatisfactorineſs at the inevidence and incertainty of the grounds and motives of their Credibility? It is only *God* who can convince ſuch Men

men by the mighty influences of his Grace, and remove these prejudices, which obstruct the reception of his truth, to whose Mercy we leave them. For us, *let us hold fast our Profession of Faith without wavering; for God is faithful who hath called us to the knowledge of his Truth.* If you understand aright the Principles of the *Christian Religion*, and the Principles of the *Protestant Religion*, it is impossible for you to be debauched and perverted either by *Socinian* or *Jesuit*, or *Sectary*. All their pretended demonstrations (for error and delusion are usually very bold and confident) are meer Sophisms and Arguments of deceit, tricks, and artifices of Wit, without any foundation of true Reason in the one, or of *Scripture* or *Apostolical Tradition* in the other. If, as I said before, the *Primitive Christians* went to Heaven, you may be assured of the same hope of Salvation in the Communion of the *Church of England*, if you add to a sound Faith the practises of a Vertuous, and Holy, and truly *Christian* Life; and if you perform the Vows you made at your *Baptism*, and renew every time you receive the most blessed *Sacrament*, and so adorn the *Primitive Faith* with Primitive Purity and Holiness.

Appendix concerning the Apoſtles *Creed.*

THis form of Faith is called by (a) *Irenæus* ὁ ἀκλινὴς κανὼν τ ἀληθείας, or the invariable Rule of Faith, received and openly profeſs'd and acknowledged by the new Convert at his Baptiſm; ὁ τ κανόνα τ ἀληθείας ἀκλινῆ ἐν ἑαυτῷ κατέχων, ὃν διὰ τ Βαπτίσμα]ος ἐλήφε--- And ſo in ſeveral other places he refers not only to the *Chriſtian* Faith in general, but to a fixt and known rule of it: As *lib.* 1. *cap.* 19. *Cùm teneamus autem nos regulam veritatis.* And *lib.* 2. *cap.* 43. *Nuſquam transferentes regulam, neque errantes ab artifice, neque abjicientes fidem*--- This rule of Faith is called ſomewhere by him, σωμάτιον τ ἀληθείας, or little body or Syſtem of Articles, containing the ſum and ſubſtance of the *Chriſtian* Religion. *Tertullian* does alſo often mention the *regula fidei*, as a thing every where known and acknowledged; as in his Book againſt *Hermogenes*, in the beginning, *de præſcript. cap.* 13. *Apol. cap.* 47. And in his Book, *de velandis Virginibus*, in the beginning, *Regula quidem fidei una omnino eſt, ſola, immobilis* (ἀκλινὴς) *& irreformabilis*; and is the ſame with what he calls ſoon after, *Lex fidei*, or the unalterable Law of Faith, which admits of no change; whereas the Church has a Power in matters of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline and external behaviour, to make what alteration ſhall be judged moſt ſuitable to the rules of Piety, Prudence, Decency, and to variety of Circumſtances of places, and times, and other accidents. *Hâc lege fidei manente, cætera jam diſciplinæ & converſationis admittunt novitatem correctionis, operante ſcilicet & perficiente uſq; in finem gratiâ Dei.* Thus in general there was an explicite rule of Faith,

(a) *Lib.* 1. *adv. hæreſes, cap.* 1.

or

or form of words in their times, who lived toward the end of the ſecond Century.

That this form was the ſame in the main with what we call the *Apoſtles* Creed, is next to be made out, which I ſhall do by laying down the words and Articles of that Form. I begin with *Irenæus*, *l.* 1. *c.*2. *Eccleſia per univerſum orbem uſque ad fines terræ ſeminata, & ab Apoſtolis, & à Diſcipulis eorum accepit eam fidem, quæ eſt in unum Deum Patrem omnipotentem qui fecit Cœlum, & terram, mare, & omnia quæ in eis ſunt; & in unum Jeſum* Chriſtum, *filium Dei, incarnatum pro noſtrâ ſalute, & in Spiritum Sanctum, qui per Prophetas prædicavit diſpoſitiones Dei, & adventum, & eam, quæ eſt ex Virgine generationem, & paſſionem, & reſurrectionem à mortuis, & in carne in Cœlos aſcenſionem dilecti* Jeſu Chriſti *Domini noſtri, & de Cœlis in gloriâ Patris adventum ejus, ad recapitulanda univerſa, & reſuſcitandam omnem carnem humani generis.* Here is an explicite acknowledgment of the Doctrine of the *Chriſtian* Faith, received all the World over by all Orthodox *Chriſtians*, wherein they profeſs to believe in one *God* the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all things which are therein: And in one Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Son of God, incarnate; that he was born of a Virgin, ſuffered, roſe from the dead, aſcended into Heaven, and that he ſhall come again in the glory of the Father, and that he ſhall raiſe the dead; and in the Holy Ghoſt. It is not here undertaken to be proved, that it is the ſame in every expreſſion of it; for that is variable; or in all its clauſes, ſeveral of which were added in after times for wiſe and juſt reaſons and ends mentioned before by *Ruſinus*. But it is evident, that the beginning was ever the ſame, the Article of one God, Almighty,

maker of the World, or of all things, or of Heaven and Earth: For they were not confined to a Phraſe, and the explication was various: And then immediately follows the Article concerning our Bleſſed Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Son of God, our Lord —— this Solemn Profeſſion being ſo common and univerſal, that the Fathers who refer to it, in all probability thought it unneceſſary oftentimes to repeat any more than the beginning, the reſt being eaſily underſtood. So, *l.* 1. *c.* 19. *Cùm teneamus nos autem regulam veritatis, id eſt, quia ſit unus Deus, omnipotens, qui omnia condidit per verbum ſuum & aptavit, & fecit ex eo, quod non erat, ad hoc, ut ſint omnia* —— lib. 2. cap. 43. *Nunquam transferentes regulam, neque errantes ab artifice, neque abjicientes fidem, quæ eſt in unum Deum, qui fecit omnia.* lib. 4. cap. 45. *Hi & eam, quæ eſt in unum Deum, qui omnia fecit, fidem noſtram cuſtodiunt, & eam, quæ eſt in Filium Dei, dilectionem adaugent, qui tantas diſpoſitiones propter nos fecit*: And to the ſame effect *cap.* 62. *Omnia ei conſtant, & in unum Deum Omnipotentem, ex quo omnia, fides integra, & in Filium Dei Chriſtum Jeſum Dominum noſtrum.*

He ſuppoſes all along, that this Confeſſion of Faith and particular form, agreeable to what we find in the Creed, was handed down in the way of Tradition from the Apoſtles. Thus, *lib.* 3. *cap.* 3. ſpeaking of St. *Clement*, he ſays, that in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, he did *annuntiare quam in recenti ab Apoſtolis receperant traditionem, annuntiantem Unum Deum, Omnipotentem, factorem Cœli & terræ*: But more expreſly and fully in the 4*th. Cap. Quid autem ſi neque Apoſtoli quidem Scripturas reliquiſſent nobis, nonne oportebat ordinem ſequi traditionis, quam tradiderunt*

iis, quibus committebant Eccleſias? Cur ordinationes aſſentiunt multæ gentes Barbarorum, quorum fortaſsè aliqui qui in Chriſtum credunt, ſine chartâ & atramento Scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus ſuis ſalutem, & veterem traditionem diligenter cuſtodientes, in unum Deum credentes, fabricatorem Cœli & terræ, & omnium, quæ in iis ſunt, per Jeſum Chriſtum Dei filium. Qui propter eminentiſſimam erga figmentum ſuum dilectionem, eam quæ eſſet ex Virgine, generationem ſuſtinuit, ipſe per ſe hominem adunans Deo, & paſſus ſub Pontio Pilato, *& reſurgens, & in claritate receptus in gloriâ, venturus ſalvator eorum, qui ſalvantur, & judex eorum, qui judicantur, & mittens in ignem æternum transfiguratores veritatis & contemptores Patris ſui & adventûs ſui.*

To this form or rule *Tertullian* plainly alludes in his Book againſt *Praxeas*, making it as Ancient as the firſt Preaching of the Goſpel by the *Apoſtles*, *cap.* 2. *Nos verò & ſemper & nunc magis, ut inſtructiones per Paracletum, deductorem Scil. omnis veritatis, unicum quidem Deum Credimus, ſub hâc tamen diſpenſatione, quam Oeconomiam credimus, ut unici Dei ſit & filius ſermo ipſius, qui ex ipſo proceſſerit, per quem omnia facta ſunt, & ſine quo factum eſt nihil. Hunc miſſum à Patre in Virginem, & ex eâ natum hominem & Deum, filium hominis, & filium Dei, & cognominatum Jeſum Chriſtum, hunc paſſum, hunc mortuum, & ſepultum ſecundum Scripturas, & reſuſcitatum à Patre, & in Cœlos reſumptum, ſedere ad dextram Patris, venturum judicare vivos & mortuos, qui exinde miſerit ſecundum promiſſionem ſuam, à Patre, Spiritum Sanctum, Paracletum, Sanctificatorem fidei eorum, qui credunt in Patrem, & Filium, & Spiritum Sanctum. Hanc regulam ab initio Evangelii decucurriſſe etiam ante priores*

quoſque

quoſque hæreticos, nedum ante Praxean heſternum, probabit tam ipſa Poſteritas omnium hæreticorum, quam ipſa novellitas Praxeæ heſterni. But more contractedly in his Book *de velandis Virginibus*, thus, *Regula quidem fidei una omninò eſt, ſola, immobilis, & irreformabilis, credendi Scil. in Unicum Deum, Omnipotentem, mundi conditorem, & Filium ejus Jeſum Chriſtum, natum ex Virgine* Mariâ, *crucifixum ſub* Pontio Pilato, *tertio die reſuſcitatum à mortuis, receptum in Cœlis, ſedentem nunc ad dextram Patris, venturum judicare vivos & mortuos, per carnis etiam reſurrectionem.*

Novatianus, a *Roman* Presbyter, who lived about the Year 240, thus begins his Book *de Trinitate. Regula exigit veritatis, ut primò omnium credamus in Deum Patrem & dominum omnipotentem, id eſt, verum omnium perfectiſſimum conditorem.* Cap. 9. *Eadem regula veritatis docet nos credere, poſt Patrem, etiam in Filium Dei, Chriſtum Jeſum dominum Deum noſtrum, Dei filium, hujus Dei, qui & unus & ſolus eſt, conditor ſcilicet rerum omnium; ut jam & ſuperius expreſſum eſt.* Cap. 29. *Sed enim odorationis & fidei auctoritas, digeſtis vocibus & literis Domini, admonet nos poſt hoc credere etiam in Spiritum Sanctum.*

That the *Apoſtles* made a Creed, and that this according to the limitations laid down above, is that Creed; both Hiſtory and Tradition juſtly induce us to believe, and it appears hence, that it is a meer Fancy and conjecture of *Voſſius, diſſert. prima de tribus ſymbolis, Sect.* 24. When he ſays, that it was compoſed by the Biſhop and Clergy of *Rome*, (he means Pope *Damaſus*) about the Year of Chriſt 400. For beſides what has been ſaid already, *Rufinus*, who lived at that time in the Neighbouring Church of *Aquileia*, ſpeaks of it, as of a moſt Ancient form in

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uſe in the preceding Ages: And *Vigilius*, *lib.* 4. *contra* Eutychem, who lived about the Year of Chriſt 500, under *Zeno* and *Anaſtaſius*, puts it out of all doubt, quoting the words of St. *Leo*, and anſwering the objection from the variety of the reading. *Univerſitas profitetur credere ſe in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, & in Jeſum Chriſtum filium ejus Dominum noſtrum. Huic capitulo ob id iſte calumniatur; cur non, dixit, in unum Jeſum Chriſtum, filium ejus, juxtà* Nicæni *decretum conſilii? Sed* Roma *& antequam* Nicæna *Synodus conveniret, à temporibus Apoſtolorum uſque ad nunc, & ſub beatæ memoriæ Cæleſtino, cui iſte rectæ fidei teſtimonium reddidit, ità fidelibus ſymbolum tradidit, nec præjudicant verba ubi ſenſus incolumis permanet.* This Creed was in uſe in the *Roman* Church long before the times of the firſt Council at *Nice*; yea, from the firſt times of the Apoſtles. St. *Leo*, in his Epiſtle to the Empreſs *Pulcheria*, *Epiſt.* 27. *Ipſius Catholicæ ſymboli brevis & perfecta confeſſio, quæ duodecim Apoſtolorum totidem eſt ſignata ſententiis, tam inſtructa ſit in munitione Cæleſti, ut omnes hæreticorum opiniones ſolo poſſint gladio detruncari.* Serm. 24. *Catholici & Apoſtolici ſymboli regula.* Serm. 60. *Qui eſt de Paſſione Domini Chriſti hâc fidei regulâ, dilectiſſimi, quam in ipſo exordio ſymboli per auctoritatem Apoſtolicæ inſtitutionis accepimus.* Serm. 93. *Inſtituto à S. Apoſtolis Symbolo repugnantes.* And above one hundred Years before him, (oo) St. *Ambroſe*, and other Biſhops with him, in an Epiſtle to Pope *Syricius*, *Credatur Symbolo Apoſtolorum, quod Eccleſia Romana intemeratum ſemper cuſtodit & ſervat.* The Confeſſion of Faith made by *Marcellus*, Biſhop of *Ancyra*, during his ſtay at *Rome* with Pope *Julius*, agrees almoſt in every

(oo) *Epiſt. lib.* 1. *Epiſt.* 7. *Edit. Pariſienſis* 1614. *Ubi male in editione* Baſileenſi, *anno* 1538. *legitur iteratum.*

every particular with the *Apostolical* form; which I shall here set down out of *Epiphanius*, *hæres.* 72. *Sect.* 3.

Πιστεύω εἰς θεὸν παντοκράτορα, καὶ εἰς χειστὸν Ἰησοῦν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ, τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν, τὸν γεννηθέντα ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου καὶ Μαρίας τῆς παρθένου, τὸν ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου σταυρωθέντα, καὶ ταφέντα, καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἀναστάντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἀναβάντα εἰς τοὺς οὐρανούς, καὶ καθήμενον ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ Πατρὸς, ὅθεν ἔρχεται κρῖναι ζῶντας καὶ νεκρούς καὶ εἰς τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἁγίαν ἐκκλησίαν, ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, σαρκὸς ἀνάστασιν, ζωὴν αἰώνιον.

This must be before the Year 352. in which Pope *Julius* dyed: And *Marcellus* himself, who had been made Bishop in the Reign of *Constantine*, as appears by his Subscription to the *Ancyran* Council, which was held some few Years before that at *Nice*, only lived to the Year of Christ 373. So that these instances sufficiently demonstrate, that this *Apostolical* form was used in the *Roman* Church before the Year 400, which is the assertion of *Vossius*, *pag.* 18. But whether it was used elsewhere or no, we shall see presently.

It will be altogether impertinent to alledge, that this is to be understood of the Creed, as now we have it, *totidem syllabis*: For this no one ever thought of; but the question is double, whether the Apostles made a form of Faith for the use of the new Converts, or no; and whether this form is not the same in the general, notwithstanding those few insertions and variations, which were made before it was thus fixt. For the affirmative of both which, we have positive Proofs, and nothing of any moment is alledged by *Vossius* to invalidate either them or the Tradition of the Church. All his other Arguments are such as these; that if the *Apostles* had agreed upon any form, St. *Luke*, who wrote their *Acts*, would not have omitted it, or at least, some of the *Apostles* themselves would have transcribed it into their *Epistles*. But the

Creed

Creed is ſuppoſed all along in the *Apoſtolical* writings, which were written to ſuch, as had been already Converted to the *Chriſtian* Faith, and ſo are not to be look'd upon as an Inſtitution, ſo much as a Direction to and confirmation of them in the *Chriſtian* Doctrine: And beſides, there was no neceſſity that it ſhould be put down in writing, it being ſhort, and eaſily remembred; as St. *Hierome* juſtly ſuppoſes, *ad Pammachium, 61 Epiſt. In Symbolo fidei & ſpei noſtræ, quod ab Apoſtolis traditum, non ſcribitur in chartâ & atramento, ſed in tabulis cordis carnalibus.* (*b*) Again, he pretends, that if there had been ſuch a form, it would have been the ſame every where. I am ſure it was ſo in effect, and in the main: And we ſhall ſhew preſently, that the *Oriental* Creed was not ſo different in the expreſſion, but that at firſt it might be the very ſame, thoſe varieties happening upon the occaſions above mentioned, to ſecure the *Catholick* Doctrine againſt the innovations of *Hereticks*. Again, he pretends, that granting ſuch additions to have been made, nothing can be imagined more irreligious, than to ſuppoſe the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church to have razed many things out of this Apoſtolical form; but this is a bare ſuppoſition of his own; nor can it be proved, that ever any ſuch thing was ſo much as ever attempted; for they only added a few words for neceſſary explication. Again, he pretends, that no Eccleſiaſtical Writer or Council make mention of it. To the former part of his Aſſertion we oppoſe the Authorities of *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Novatianus*, St.

(*b*) Rufinus *in expoſitione Symboli idcirco non ſcribi chartulis atque membranis, ſed retineri cordibus tradiderunt: Ut certum eſſet neminem hæc ex lectione, quæ interdum pervenire etiam ad Infideles ſolet, ſed ex Apoſtolorum traditione didiciſſe.* Facundus Hermianenſis *in defenſione trium Capitulorum Concilii* Chalcedonenſis, *lib. 8. cap. 7. Sic nec generali Symbolo fidei Chriſtianæ, quâ initiamur, quicquam eſt fortius, quamvis non Scripto non tradatur.*

 Ambroſe,

Ambroſe, St. *Hierome*, *Ruſinus*, St. *Leo*, *Vigilius* --- And for the *Greek* Hiſtorians, we ſhall find, that they, following the Opinion and Acknowledgment of the *Nicene* Fathers, look'd upon that form, making ſome allowances, to be derived from the Apoſtles, not only as to the ſenſe of the Articles, but as to the expreſſions: ᾗ αὕτη μὲν ἡ πίστις παρεδόθη ἀπὸ τῶν ἁγίων Ἀποστόλων. *Epiphanius in Anchorato*, juſt after he had repeated the *Nicene* Creed. We are therefore in the next place to enquire, whether there was not a form of Faith uſed in the *Oriental* Churches, long before the Council at *Nice*, and what that was.

(a) *In Epiſtolâ ad ſuos* Cæſarienſes *apud* Socrat. *Hiſtor. Eccleſ. lib.* 1. *cap.* 8. Theodorit. *Hiſt. Eccl. lib.* 1. *cap.* 12.

(*a*) *Euſebius Pamphili*, Biſhop of *Cæſarea* in *Palæſtine*, propoſed a Creed, or form of Faith to the Emperour and *Nicene* Fathers, which, he ſays, he had received from the *Biſhops* his Predeceſſors, and had been taught and Catechized in, and made profeſſion of at his Baptiſm, according to the eſtabliſhment and order of the *Catholick* Church. The ground of this, thoſe great and wiſe Men, who were Aſſembled in that Council, thought fit to retain, making ſome alterations and additions, which were judged neceſſary to confound the Hereſie of *Arius*, which had diſtracted the minds of the People, and diſturbed the Peace of the Empire. The (*b*) Fathers of the firſt Council at *Conſtantinople* call this *Nicene* form, πρεσβυτάτην, καὶ ἀκόλουθον τῷ Βαπτίσματι, moſt Ancient, and what was pronounced by the Candidates of Baptiſm. If the form of the old *Jeruſalem* Creed were entirely extant (part of which we have in the Liturgy of St. *James*) the matter would then be put out of doubt; for that it was more contracted than that form, which St. *Cyril* about the Year 350 explained in his Learned Lectures

(*b*) Theodorit. *lib.* 5. *cap.* 9.

Lectures or Institutions, to those who had been Baptized, appears by the Fragment preserved.

The form which *Eusebius* presented to the Emperour and Council, was thus. *We believe in one God, the Father, Almighty, Creator of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Word of God, God of God, light of light, life of life, the only begotten Son, the first-born of every Creature, begotten of God the Father before all Worlds, by whom all things were made, who for our Salvation was Incarnate, and conversed among men; he Suffered, and rose the third day, and ascended to the Father, and he shall come again with glory to Judge both the quick and the dead--- We believe also in the Holy Ghost---* I do not pretend to say, that this was the old form used from the beginning; for it is plain from the very contexture, and from the omission of some Clauses by the *Nicene* Fathers, that they lookt upon this as interpolated. It being certain and undoubted, that there was an old *Apostolical* form, or form used from the very beginnings of *Christianity* to be profest at Baptism, the Bishops of the chief Sees thought themselves at liberty to explain or add, as they judged most proper for the time wherein they lived; which is the true Reason, as I must intimate again, why the forms are so various. And especially when we consider, that according to the form of Baptism, the chief design of this Profession of Faith made at the receiving it, was an explicite acknowledgment of each of the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity: And accordingly here the *Nicene* Creed stops (for that which is commonly called so, ought, upon the account of the several additions, to be called the *Constantinopolitan* Creed.) Though that in some other old Creeds were added the Articles of the Resurrection of the Flesh, and of everlasting Life, appears from the (*a*) Confession of the Bishops met at *Antioch* not long after under *Constantius*. And that of one Church also, in others, as St. (*b*) *Jerome* positively asserts. And that of Remission of Sins,

(*a*) Socrat. *lib.* 1. *cap.* 10.

(*b*) *In Symbolo fidei & spei nostræ, quod ab Apostolis traditur, non scribitur, in chartis & atramento, sed tabulis cordis carnalibus, per confessionem Trinitatis & unitatem Ecclesiæ, omne Christiani dogmatis Sacramentum carnis resurrectione concluditur. Epist.* 61. *ad* Pammachium *adversus errores* Joannis Hierosolymitani.

and everlasting Life, is clear from St. (*c*) *Cyprian.* Agreeably to this, *Vossius* supposeth the old *Eastern* Creed to be this, or after this manner. *I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of all things, visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only Begotten Son of God, who for us men, and for our Salvation came down from Heaven, and was Incarnate, and was made man: He suffered, and rose the third day from the dead, and ascended into the Heavens, and he shall come again to judge both the quick and the dead. And (I believe) in the Holy Ghost.*

(*c*) *Epist.* 70. *Sed & ipsa interrogatio, quæ fit in Baptismo, est testis veritatis. Nam cum dicimus, credis in vitam æternam & remissionem peccatorum per Sanctam Ecclesiam, intelligimus remissionem peccatorum non nisi in Ecclesiâ dari. Epist.* 76. *Magno. Quod si aliquis illud opponit, ut dicat eandem* Novatianum *legem tenere, quam Ecclesia Catholica teneat, eodem Symbolo, quo & nos Baptizare,* &c. *Nam cum dicunt, credis remissionem peccatorum & vitam æternam per Sanctam Ecclesiam, mentiuntur in interrogatione, quando non habeant Ecclesiam.*

If this should be allowed him, which has no other Authority but his own conjecture, yet we may hence conclude, that both the Eastern and the Western Churches may well and justly pretend to derive their forms from the Apostles: Which must be understood as to the ground of each Creed, and in the general. For that the Apostles did Pen every word, or every Article of the Creed, which now bears their Name, was never pretended or asserted by any one: Nay, the contrary is now, and was Anciently acknowledged, and the variety of forms in the chief *Apostolical* Sees, used according to the exigence of the times, is a convincing Proof. But this doth not hinder, but rather suppose; that there was a short Form proposed by the *Apostles*, as the Ancient Writers have asserted: And that the old *Oriental Creed*, and the old *Roman* are almost in expression, but wholly in effect, the same, and consequently *Apostolical.*

FINIS.